

# TWO LETTERS

TO A FRIEND, *L*

ON THE REMOVAL OF THE

REV. MR. *F---S S---T,*

From a Church in G--LF--D, to One  
in P-----LP----A.



Printed in the Year 1769.

# L E T T E R I.

Dear Sir,

**T**HIS acknowledges the receipt of yours, of the 17th ult. wherein you particularly request, that I would give you an account, of the removal of the Rev. Mr. J---s S--t, from hence, to Ph---a. On my first view of the proposal, I wholly refused in my own mind : but on a second, and more serious consideration, (for reasons hereafter mentioned) I conclude to comply therewith.

And should now have began, with the first proposal made to Mr. S--t from P--a, of removing thither ; omitting every thing preceeding, with regard to himself and the society, were it not, Sir, for some intimations in your letter, at first very surprizing to me ; but soon after was confirm'd, that the case was truly as you had intimated, by similar accounts from different quarters. And lest you should have neglected to take a copy of your letter ; and properly to state the case, I will take the liberty to transcribe some part thereof. --- Doubtless you consider the covenant made between a minister and people, to be of such a nature, that it obliges both parties duly to observe, and perform the articles agreed on, and contain'd in the covenant ; which, on the part of the minister, is to take the oversight of the church and people ; dispense the word, administer the sacraments, and in all things to walk among that people as a minister of Christ, agreeable to the gospel. And it is generally supposed, that when a minister so agrees with a people, it is for the term of life ; for only on this supposition do the people generally (among us) give them a settlement ; which commonly is a house, with some land, &c. It would be folly for a people thus to do, if a minister might, when he pleas'd, remove from them, with his settlement or any part thereof ; for if so, the people would have but little encouragement to settle a minister. --- The people on their part are oblig'd to maintain and support their minister, according to the articles of the covenant or agreement, and gospel rules. Upon the due performance of this, does the relation between a minister and people exist. And a violation on either side, is (in my opinion) of a very vile nature. --- Scripture and reason assents hereto ; and  
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the civil law always supposes, that the violator of a contract, is liable to the other party for the damage he or they sustain thereupon. And according to the representation of Mr. S---t, and others, and which is believ'd by many; this has been the case on the part of the parish; at least so far, that Mr. S---t was justifiable in seeking a dissolution of the relation, between them, and finally (not only in seeking, but) dissolving it himself, and removing himself and pastoral relation from them. If he was justifiable in this, great must be their sin and error.---However, what I want particularly to know is this, viz. Whether, as 'tis represented, his parish did keep him in mean, low, necessitous and contracted circumstances, as to temporal interests; whereby he was reduced to great necessities, and was thereby oblig'd to seek a dismissal. For on this account, many (supposing the case to be truly so) blame the society much, and seem surpriz'd that he did not remove sooner, and wonder how he could content himself, in such circumstances, so long as he did. Further, I would be glad to know, whether there was any backwardness, or unwillingness in the people, in granting him a sufficient support; or in fulfilling their agreements? Whether there were any differences, disputes, &c. in the society with Mr. S---t, whereby his services were rendered useless, &c. or whether the affections of the people, were alienated from him; and on these accounts whether Mr. S.'s situation was so uneasy, that he was justifiable in seeking a dismissal from them? Whether Mr. S. has at various times sought a dismissal, and removal from his people, to different places? and should be glad to know what were his reasons therefor? And further, am desirous to know, the methods himself, and the society made use of to accommodate matters when he remov'd; for I understand he blames them exceedingly, and thinks they use him extremely ill in having recourse to the civil law.---The society's conduct in these particulars, being represented in an unfavourable point of light, and being generally believ'd, they are thereby exposed to, and indeed are already the subject of censure and reproach, among many people abroad; and if the case be so, surely they are much to blame. But if not, the blame must certainly fall on Mr. S. Another thing that I should be glad to have an account of, which I had like to have forgot, is the conduct of the council call'd on that occasion; the reasons they acted upon, &c.

*in all which particulars, I desire a true and impartial account.*

The society, Sir, I believe are not conscious of meriting such a censure ; but suppose such persons are misinform'd, and not knowing the true circumstances of the affair, do unjustly blame them. This is the only prevailing motive, that induces me, to comply with your request. And I can think of no better method of answering every particular, than by giving you a particular account of the treatment, the society, and Mr. S. have receiv'd from each other, respecting those particulars you mention ; even if I may so say, from his humble appearance among them, to the hour of *his baughty departure*. And tho' I should mention some things relative to the society's treatment of Mr. S. which by some, may be tho't even below either the gentleman, or christian to mention ; yet I doubt not, but you will pardon me herein, when you consider the circumstances of the case require it.

When Mr. S. first came among them, he was in very low and necessitous circumstances. I have often heard him say, he was not worth any thing ; tho' that was no blemish in his character, for that is often the case with the most valuable men. Immediately upon his coming among them, particular members of the society, contributed to his then present necessities, for cloathing, &c. which was continued for about three years, when he was married : for in all that time, (if dependance may be had upon his landlady's veracity, which was never disputed) it never cost him any thing at all for his cloathing. And after that, for about twenty years, he had the charitable assistance of the most wealthy of his parish, in various particulars ; for it was the stated practice of many families, to provide in that way, his butter, cheese, &c. 'Twas likewise their practice for about that term of time, to spin the greatest part, if not all the linnen yarn his family needed ; the most who contributed this way, provided materials for that purpose. And I believe I may say, almost every member exerted himself, according to his ability, in contributing to his support, comfort and convenience. This they did, in almost every thing



thing either necessary or useful for a family; with a view of making his abode among them agreeable and happy. However small these may appear, yet herein was their willingness, and endeavour to support him, in the best manner they could, and their esteem for him, abundantly manifested. At his first coming among them, his religious character and principles, were as low in the esteem of most men, as his temporal interest really was. And the society's religious character was about as low; on this account they were on an equal footing; and no doubt when he first settled among them, it was mutually intended, to embark their religious characters in the same bottom, and rise and fall together. But it seems that Mr. S. from an ambitious disposition, being unwilling any longer to rise with them, by ascension of steps, had a mind with one leap to place himself, in such an exalted state of worldly grandeur and honour, as would at once, answer all that his ambitious humor could desire; tho' he left his people to fall and rise no more. How fully he has answered his design am unable to say.

However, besides what the society contributed towards his support, in the manner before mentioned, by way of gratuity; the votes of the society will show, that they were always ready and willing to grant him what he tho't requisite in that way; for he never ask'd any thing of them, but what was granted him.

In the year 1743, when he settled with them, he agreed, for £. 150 per annum salary; and a quarter of an acre of land and a house as a settlement. Soon after this agreement, he desired the house might be longer and wider than at first proposed, and that another window might be added in each room; to which the society agreed.

From the year 1743, to 1755, his salary had been gradually rising, according as their lists of estate had encreased, at which time, Feb. 1755, they raised it to £. 600; and also added so much to the two preceeding years, as to make his salary in each of them equal with that sum. Dec. 1755, they voted, to give Mr. S. £. 60 law-  
ful

ful money : the shifting the currency, and stating of it at that sum in lawful, was upon his desire, that something might be settled upon him for life. In June 1757, they voted to hire him a pasture for a horse, and two cows ; and the members subscribed to give him 50 loads of wood yearly. In Dec. 1759, they voted him a salary of £. 66. In 1763, he desired his salary might be raised to £. 80. and he would relinquish the wood and pasture. In Dec. 1766, as there had been no special agreement made with him, since 1755, (what had been added since, was yearly grants) he grew uneasy, and sent to the meeting in writing, a desire, that once for all, they would settle £. 80 per annum, during his life, or work in the ministry ; and gave such assurance to the committee, that he would never ask for another addition to his salary, that one of the committee offer'd to bind himself, that Mr. S. would never ask for any thing further, with regard to his salary. That paper was lodg'd in the clerk's office, but could never be found, after a certain gentleman had been there for some society records.

In the year 1768, another grant was made, and as 'tis connected with an attempt to remove from his people, I must take notice of that, in this place. In May of this year, he had an invitation from a church in S---m, to remove there &c. which was principally urg'd with the motive, of £. 130 per annum salary, and more if necessary, together with some perquisites, &c. provided his church would consent. And doubtless they thought they would, as they had been informed that the society could not maintain a minister. 'Tis no difficult task to determine from whence their information came ; as Mr. S. was there the year before, with a design of procuring the invitation, as I heard him say. Upon the receipt of this invitation, he warn'd a meeting of the church, and laid the matter before them, and desir'd they would grant him a dismission, but they did not choose to do any thing about it, without the society ; who met upon it. He laid the case before them, and urg'd a dismission with many reasons, drawn from the consideration of the disturbances there were in the society, backwardness



in supporting of him, the prospect of more extensive usefulness, it being a call of God, a prospect of advancing his temporal interests, &c. He told them that what they gave him was not sufficient for his support; tho' he lived well, yet frugal; and he did not intend to alter his manner of living on their account; yet, as he did not come to the meeting, to ask for any addition to his salary, he should not say any thing further upon it than this, that they did not give him enough. 'Twas easy to discover that if they expected to keep him, they must also expect to give him more; for as he had often said he look'd upon himself, to be of too much importance to be the minister of such a small people. Or other words, a watchman on those undecorated walls; altho' God, and his own consent had placed him there. The vote was put, whether they would dismiss him or not; which pass'd in the negative, even to an individual. The meeting then adjourn'd, in order to know what would be satisfactory to Mr. S. but could not get him to say any thing further; and when they met again did nothing, for Mr. S. had nothing further to lay before them, and they supposed 'twould be best to know, what would be satisfactory, before they made another grant; upon which the meeting was dissolv'd. Mr. S. manifested such an uneasiness, at their doing nothing for him, that a meeting was again warn'd. The committee then waited upon Mr. S. to know what would be satisfactory to him. And finally he told them, that if they would grant him £. 15 more per ann. he would ever after be contented, and would refuse all calls that should ever after be made to him, without ever troubling the society, &c. The society supposing, that Mr. S. must be mistaken in his calculation, and supposed that in some way or other, they had supported him well, that the gospel requir'd no more of them in such a case, than what they had done. They further supposed, that this demand, had principally a design of crouding on them, and by this and other methods, which he made use of, to weary them so much, that they would in time be willing to dismiss him, and they thought there was as much reason to believe

believe that Mr. S. would make another demand of £. 15 in a short time ; as there was eighteen months before, ( when he supposed that £. 80 was sufficient, and had it stated at that sum ) ; that he would make the present demand, without any apparent difference in his circumstances. Notwithstanding this demand was view'd in this point of light, and at this time was thought unreasonable ; yet they granted half of it, and were coming into some method, to provide him some wood ; but he told them, he would have them to know, he did not intend to live on the charity of the people. I suppose he had forgot his first coming among them. Perhaps, sir, you may think these grants were small, and that Mr. S. had just reason to say, they did not support him ; that his circumstances were low, contracted, &c. But if we take a view of his outward circumstances, when he removed, it will evidently appear, that besides supporting a large, and expensive family ; he advanced his interest considerably. 'Tis well known, that he had nothing when he first came among them. Mrs. S. had an interest of about £. 300. And he pretends to suppose, that that sum, augmented his estate, to what it was when he remov'd. The method he computes it, is this ; £. 300 at 6 per cent. interest with interest added to interest, for 25 years, amounts to the value of his estate, or more ; so that according to this computation, spent on his own estate : but I quere here, whether that sum in lands improv'd in the best manner, will produce such an enormous profit. However, a considerable part of that patrimony, was receiv'd in household furniture ; which instead of producing a profit, was really expensive to him. Some part of it he put into trade ; but soon shifted it for land, at £. 60, per acre. With £. 40, he purchased a Negro ; which soon died in his family. And I suppose, about half of it, he never received, till about five or six years ago ; which he laid out in part for the estate he is now in possession of. And I could never understand that he had, ever more than £. 100, at interest, for more than two years. I leave others to determine, whether that sum, improv'd in that manner, could produce such a profit, as to amount



to £. 1000. Which I suppose is the least, his estate would have been valued at, were it inventory'd when he remov'd; if not, it must have arisen from the society; for he had no other ways of advancing his interest. 'Tis true, if he had had a considerable sum of money at interest, any considerable time, and now is not worth so much, by reason of supporting his family; he had reason to complain; and if so, let the parish bear the charge. But if not, if in truth he has added as much to his estate in that time, as any man in the town, excepting one or two, and that by way of the society; then let them take the honour, in this manner of starving their minister.

By this time, sir, I can't but think that you are satisfied, that the society were always ready and willing, to grant him what he supposed was necessary; and that he not only supported a large family, but did actually advance his interest considerably; which I should think, was far from necessitous, and contracted circumstances. And I do really think that what the society have done for Mr. S. view'd in the same point of light with the widow's mite, is as much as the richest parish in America could have done; for they did every thing for him that they could do.

As to there being a backwardness in the society in fulfilling their agreements with him; differences, alienation of affections, &c. whereby his situation was made very uneasy, and his labours render'd useles and unprofitable, &c. of which you seem desirous of being inform'd. To these I may answer, that his salary was paid him generally in season, and as soon as is generally done in other parishes; tho' possibly, (as is the case in all societies,) some members, through inability may not answer their proportion of his salary, immediately upon its becoming due; yet these ever endeavour'd to pay as soon as they could; and never was the payment of a farthing protracted, through unwillingness, or backwardness in supporting him. The method of payment was ever satisfactory to Mr. S. till of late; when, if any part of his salary was unpaid, at the time of its becoming due, (tho' the greater part was paid long before) the

committee were lure to receive often, repeated and pressing demands for it, till it was paid; with exclamations against the people, &c. By which method, he once or twice forced some to express themselves inadvertently; of which he made great use to answer his purposes; of which more presently. And this thing is certain, he did not go away, with them in his debt. And the last year, his salary was paid at the time he prefix'd, which they intended ever after to do; for they were determin'd, not to give him occasion for the future, to complain on that, or any other account. There never was a difference in the society with him on any account, that I know of: tho' there was a small disturbance in the society 'tis true, on account of a new method of singing being introduced, and this is almost universally the case in all churches; so that 'tis nothing strange or uncommon. There were five or six members dissatisfied with it; and tho' they said much to Mr. S. about it, yet I never understood that they were any more dissatisfied with him, than any other person in the society, who fell in with the method, nor ever design'd, that the dispute should be carried on between them and him; and the greatest part, if not all those dissatisfied members, repeatedly declar'd that they would never make any further disturbance, or difficulty about it. The like disturbance arose in the other society in this town, and to as great a degree; tho' on some accounts, had not the same effect: for how often have I heard of the like difficulty in churches; but never before, did I hear of a minister travelling 180 miles, to procure an invitation to another church, because five or six members were dissatisfied (not with him,) but with the introduction of a new method of singing in the church! But this disturbance is now subside, (as is generally the case) and were it not for Mr. S.'s almost unparrell'd inclination for riches, grandeur, &c. himself and the people of his charge, might now enjoy the fruits of love and harmony. Altho' Mr. S. had done quite enough to alienate the affections of the people from him (and perhaps that was the only reason he had to suspect such a thing) yet I believe no people on the continent,



continent, were ever better united in a minister than they were in him; which evidently was manifested, in their meeting which was full, (after he had declar'd to the council that he should follow their advice, and consequently break covenant with them); they unanimously even to an individual voted, that if he would yet tarry with them, they would show him all possible respect and honour, or to that import. Another such instance in such circumstances, I believe, cannot be produced. I never heard, nor even thought, nor do I now think the affections of an individual in the society were ever alienated from him. And his situation might have been as happy here, as could be desir'd, were it not from his own disposition; it was that, and that only, that render'd it uneasy, if it ever was so. On these accounts, never were his services among them render'd useless; if they were, other reasons must be found for that; tho' there is reason to believe, that they were as successful, as the generality of other ministers have been.

Doubtless Mr. S. (as you have intimated) has represented the conduct of the society towards him in these particulars in a very unfavourable light, since he removed; for he commonly improved all opportunities to do so before. The particular view, or design he had in representing things in the manner he did, and in some other parts of his conduct, is not for me positively to say; yet I can tell you what his best friends, who were intimately acquainted with him, and others who were well acquainted with the affair, suppose, viz. That Mr. S. had determin'd to remove from his people some time ago, to some populous town or city: for had not those different churches, from which he has had invitations, some intimations, that he was to be obtained, it is very improbable, that they would have prosecuted their invitations in such a sanguine manner, as they mostly did; which could arise from nothing, but from their being assur'd of his willingness or desire to remove.

Having determin'd on the thing, he made use of every method he could to effect it; and having an invitation from a church in P---th, in the year 1757, he urg'd the necessity

sity and expediency of his removal thither, principally from a consideration of its being a call of God, the prospect of extensive usefulness, &c. but not having any thing to alledge against the society, could not obtain the advice of the council; that was called on that occasion; and he seeing on what account that attempt prov'd abortive, found it would be but a fruitless endeavour to attempt a removal again, without he could accuse the society of something, from which he might extort a plausible reason for the dissolution of the relation between him and them.

With this view, 'tis easy to account for his giving an answer to a church in B—n, (which solicited him to remove thither four or five years ago) without troubling either the society or a council about it; for at that time, he had not a sufficiency to alledge against them. He therefore, as it is generally supposed, has tried every possible method since, by crouding on the society in different ways, thereby to try to make them uneasy with him; to force some unsuitable expression from them &c. and by representing, both at home and abroad, particularly in the associations, in an aggravated manner, (if I may so say) the uneasiness of the people with him, the alienation of affections from him; which none but himself ever thought of; their backwardness of supporting him; which was never the case &c. and all with a design of differing with them, that he might have whereof to accuse them, from which he might plead a reason sufficient for him, to dissolve the relation between them; that he might have something to justify his conduct in the view of the world, &c. and if possible, to save his character from blemish, by casting the blame on the society. And it happened very lucky for his designs, that about the time that he had got things so far, the disturbance about the singing happened; as before mentioned; in which he laboured very hard to make it appear, that it was between himself and the church; tho' it was no such thing. Yet, doubtless, he now supposed, that he had a sufficient stock of accusations against them; which, together with the prospects of more extensive usefulness in other places, &c. (which plea always stands ready in such cases) would



would be sufficient to obtain the advice of his brethren to dissolve the relation between him and his church. And fearing this opportunity might pass unimprov'd, by not having an invitation, &c. he travelled to S---m to procure one : But that invitation being given with a proviso of his church's consenting, did not fully answer his purpose.--- About three months after, the invitation from P-----a came, with no proviso at all. This he says, he was no way instrumental in procuring. I can't say that he was ; but 'tis very strange, that in P-----a, 200 miles from hence, they should be at such an expence, as two or three of them to travel up here, not knowing but that he would positively refuse them ; certainly they must have had some intimations from somewhere that he was to be obtained, that rendered it so probable, that they never desired him in a letter they wrote him before hand, that he would let them know before they came up, whether he was willing to remove or not. Perhaps it may by some be thought uncharitable to suppose, that Mr. S. from a thirst after worldly grandeur, honour, &c. did determine on a breach of covenant with his people, and a removal to some populous place ; and being unable to accomplish his designs without, made use of unjustifiable methods with the society for that end ; and that worldly views, rather than God's glory, and his duty, were his prevailing motives. I would not surmise such a thing, did not almost every circumstance concur to manifest it. Neither do I say the cause was actually so : But I say, that almost every one acquainted with the affair, and all the circumstances of it do believe so.

On Mr. S's receiving this last invitation, supposing (tho' it came in consequence of his publishing, or manifesting his great desire of breaking covenant with his people, and removing to some large town or city, where he could shine with peculiar lustre, &c.) that he must treat it as a call from heaven, and have it canvass'd in a very religious manner ; and if possible, to determine whether the voice of God was in it, or not ; and what was his duty herein, &c. He call'd his church together, and laid the case before them,  
and

and desired that they would join with him in the calling of a council ; he said he was at a loss respecting his duty in the affair---'twas of great importance---too great for him to determine---a council was an ordinance of God, &c. They reply'd, there was nothing in the church that they needed advice upon ; they had no difference with him, the case respected him solely. He answered, if they left him, he must leave them ; and if they would not join with him in it, he must proceed and call a council himself : But 'twould be much best for them to join with him. Upon which, some of the church supposing, that it would look unfriendly and hard if they neglected or refused to give him what assistance in the affair they could, in order to his obtaining satisfaction, proposed to join in calling a council to hear, consider and advise in the case ; but would have nothing to do in calling a decisive council. Upon which, the vote was put in that form, and there was an equality in the vote ; upon which Mr. S. said, his vote would turn it, and so recorded it a vote : tho' Mr. S. being one party, and the church another, he had no right to vote ; and therefore this could not properly be said to be a vote : but they not (till since) knowing the power of an advisory council, were somewhat indifferent about it, so did not object against it. The council accordingly came, and having heard the case, finally turn'd their advice in favour of his removal, upon his inclination : For the particulars of which I must refer you to my next. On the council's declaring their advice, Mr. S. heartily thank'd them therefor, and said he should endeavour to follow it. The evening following he desired the church to meet him at a private house, where he urg'd them to grant him a dismissal ; but they could not see it to be their duty, therefore did not grant it. He then ask'd them, if he should preach for them the next sabbath, they supposing, that he had determin'd to break covenant with them ; some of them reply'd, that unless he was their minister, they should not hear him, and desir'd he would tell them, whether he was or not ; which he refus'd to do. The next day he agreed with the com---rs,



on a method for his removal to P---h---a. On Saturday he told the committee, that if they would desire him in the name of the society, he would preach for them the next day, (not as their minister) but it could not be expected, that they should desire him as a stranger, to preach for them. This day he sent for his bible from the meeting-house. Notwithstanding these things, he has represented that the society broke covenant with him, by thrusting him out, and refusing to let him preach, and procuring another minister to preach for them the next day, while he himself was with them. Yet, if I may so say, he, tho' present in the body, was absent in the spirit; and it had been evidently manifested, that that had been the case, in a great measure for a long time before. On Monday following, the society had a meeting; and sent their committee to desire him to let them know, whether he look'd upon himself their minister or not; but he would not give them a direct answer. On their return and report, the society voted, that if Mr. S. supposed that he was their minister, &c. they were ready and willing to show him all the honor and respect, due to him and his office; or to that import. -- 'Twas difficult to determine, (so as to act) whether the relation between them was dissolv'd or not; -- for tho' he declar'd to the council, that he should follow their advice, and agreed with the c---rs on a method for his removal, &c. previous to the church's consent, or even before it was desir'd, upon which it was generally supposed, that he had dissolv'd that relation, yet he insisted much on the church's consent. However, he was waited on with this vote by the committee, who repeated the request; but he would return no direct answer. Agreeable to this previous desire, the church waited on him this evening at his house. When he again urg'd them very warmly, to grant him a dismissal; the church supposing, (having sufficient reason therefor) that Mr. S. to gratify an ambitious inclination, &c. was the procurer of this, and all former invitations; therefore could not be a call of God; and the council consulting Mr. S's inclination more than any thing else, consequently could not be an evidence of its being God's will, and his duty; therefore they

they could not assent thereto. Tho' I have heard them say, that if they had any evidence that it was really a call of God, they would without hesitation have granted him a dismission; but they supposing there was none, did not grant it. Not only the society, but Mr. S. supposed that he should return something to the society; and he supposed that it should be about the sixth part of his settlement; but finally, as he supposed that about £. 50 was due to him for the part of the last year that he preach'd, he would give that up if they would settle upon it. But they supposed, that that would in no measure compensate the damage that they sustained upon his removal; and as he had broke covenant with them, they tho't it but reasonable, that he should make good the damage that it was to them; -- the least that it could be computed at, will amount to the settlement of another minister, as good as he was; the overplus expence of which, will amount to more than what he offer'd them. The society appointed a committee to treat with him upon it, who met on an afternoon for that purpose; when he made them about the abovementioned proposal. They supposing it inadequate to the damage, &c. refused it; they then agreed to refer the whole matter to arbitration; they debated much in the choice of the arbitrators; but finally agreed in the choice of three gentlemen, and also on the time and place therefor; they then proceeded to agree on the instructions, or matter to be refer'd to them; they differed in this, Mr. S. would refer nothing to them, but this, *viz. What part of his settlement he should refund back to the society*; he would not have damages come into consideration; this being what they principally differ'd upon before, they were unwilling to refer it in that manner. There were seven, or eight, or more forms drawn up, which were disputed upon till five o'clock next morning; when one was drawn in the following manner, *viz. What in justice and equity, all things considered, shall Mr. S. give to the society, for the damage they sustain, on account of his removal.* To this Mr. S. and the committee agreed: They further agreed, that they would enter into sufficient bonds, to abide the judgment of the arbitrators. It being late, they

agreed



agreed to refer the signing the bonds and agreement till the next day ; for the performance of which at that time, they faithfully promised each other. One of the committee offer'd to forfeit his estate, on Mr. S.'s failure in this promise. The next day the person who was to have notified the arbitrators, waited on Mr. S. for the letters and instructions, to communicate to them ; Mr. S. said the agent of the society not being there, they were not sign'd, and therefore he could not have them. He replied, that if Mr. S. would sign them, he would faithfully deliver them to the agent ; and if he would sign them, he would proceed ; if not, he would return them immediately to him. This Mr. S. refus'd. The agent on his coming, waited on Mr. S. in order to perform what they had agreed on the preceeding night ; but he then wholly refus'd to do any thing about it ; if he did, he would not obligate himself, in a sum exceeding five pounds, to abide judgment, &c. The reason he offered for this, was, that they had a design of dealing unfairly, or deceitfully with him ; or according to his terms, they were upon tricks with him. This was a groundless surmise ; 'tis very evident they had no design nor desire, of his or their doing any thing but justice in the affair ; which, perhaps, was the true reason of his thus falling from his promise.

And now they had but one way left ; that was to commence a suit in the common law against him, (unless they would accept of his proposals, which they all along supposed insufficient) for they had tried every possible method for accomodation, which proved ineffectual ; they therefore attach'd his estate for a trial, &c. However unfriendly this may appear, Mr. S. was the only cause of it ; for it might have been refer'd to other persons to determine, if he had pleased, which is always esteem'd the most reasonable method in such cases.

Mr. S. the day following, again desir'd the committee to meet him ; which they did. He told them, that he was about selling his estate, and desir'd that they would take the attachment off from it, that he might convey it away ; and when he had taken a deed of a house and some land ;

which he was to take in part pay, &c. they might attach that. This proposal seem'd plausible enough, and they being dispos'd to lay him under no greater disadvantage than necessary, were about to do it. But when they come to consider that after Mr. S. had convey'd his estate away, he might defer taking a deed of the other house, &c. for special reasons, till after his removal ; and being unacquainted with the various turns in the law, &c. thought it best not to expose themselves to any disappointment ; therefore did not comply with his request. They then again propos'd to refer it to arbitration, as they had before agreed ; he then objected against one of the men : They then propos'd to choose another, or any other three ; this he did not choose to do. He then ask'd them, what they would take to settle ? &c. They told him they thought it reasonable that he should return his settlement at least. He got up in haste, and said that was trifling ; he chose the law should decide it ; and so went out, having agreed on nothing.

Thus you see, Sir, with what reason Mr. S. complain'd of the parish's keeping of him in contracted circumstances ; of their backwardness in supporting of him, and fulfilling their agreements, &c. of their disaffection towards him ; their differing with him, &c. and of the reasons he had for seeking a dismissal ; his primary views herein ; together with the means he used therefor ; and that he did actually violate, and break the covenant or contract he made with this people, by removing himself and pastoral relation from them, without and against their consent ; and that he was the only cause of the case now in law being unsettled ; for the people were willing and desirous, that (as they could not agree themselves) other persons should settle it for them, in a christian and friendly manner ; for which purpose they made use of every possible method.

Perhaps Mr. S. was under the strongest ties to his people of any minister on the continent. No parish could do more for a minister than they, considering their circumstances. None have had greater love for a minister than they. No minister and people have suffered more in their religious  
characters



characters than they. And in their distresses of every kind, they have been almost equal sharers. Their affections have ever (till of late) been closely united ; and even till the last, this was the case on the side of the people. But alas ! for him, for the sake of ----- did withdraw his wonted affection from the people ; broke his solemn covenant with them ; violated every law of gratitude, and the more tender law of distress'd friendship. If any thing can be darker than his coat, it must be some parts of his conduct. *And if he has dealt truly and sincerely with his people, then let him rejoice in the P-----ns, and they in him : But if not, let fire proceed from each and refine both.* Mr. S. on many accounts, deserves the esteem of mankind ; to be particular, time would fail. Let it suffice to say, that on no account that I know of, does he deserve the censure of any, except in his disposition for worldly grandeur, honour, applause, &c. into which it is supposed, all those difficulties may be reduced, as their cause ; for which I heartily pray God to forgive him.

Dear Sir, I intended to have given you an account of the conduct of the council, &c. call'd on that occasion ; but fearing lest I have already intruded on your patience, must omit that till another opportunity. For the present---Adieu.

August 20th, 1769.

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## L E T T E R II.

Dear Sir,

**I** Will now (agreeable to your desire, and my former promise) give you the reasons which influenced the council to give Mr. S. such advice as they did. And I can give you those only, which they tell us both in writing and verbally were the reasons, which I will now do, and make some remarks upon them, and leave it with you to judge, as to the justice of his and their conduct, and my remarks. And will first take notice of their resolves. The first of which was, *Whether the pastoral relation of a minister and his church is of such a nature, that it may ever be dissolv'd without the church's*

*church's consent* ? Resolved in the affirmative. Why a council of wise men should set twenty four hours, in the most deliberate manner, to bring this out, I know not ; a thing perhaps never disputed, for this one plain reason, If a minister and his family were perishing for want of the necessaries of life, through the inability or backwardness of his parish in contributing to his support, reason and scripture would justify him in seeking a dismissal from that people. It is evident, from this, that they supposed that there is a relation between a minister and his church, and that that relation was of such a nature, that it must be dissolv'd before the parties related could be releas'd or discharg'd from the obligation they were under to each other. By the word relation, I think they must mean some obligation, or something founded on a covenant, agreement, or mutual contract ; without which there can be no relation or union between parties ; mankind know of no other way more solemnly and strongly to bind themselves to each other. And is this obligation on minister and people of so slender a nature, that the advice of another to a breach of it, really nullifies the obligation, and dissolves the relation ? If so, advice may set aside every obligation in human life.

We may judge of the nature of this advice that this council gave, by the effects of it ; and perhaps, guess at the spirit which reign'd in the advisors. The effect was the dissolution of the relation between a minister and church. But few stronger or tenderer ties among mankind, always made by the parties at full age, in a religious manner, and confirmed by a statute law of this colony. And altho' mankind are universally agreed, that advice has nothing binding or authoratative in it, (simply consider'd) that it cannot be given nor taken authoratively ; yet we see in this case, a congregational council in N. England, have assum'd a greater degree of church authority, than the first clergyman in Europe ever pretended to. 'Tis true (by his supposed right) he may dissolve a relation by a decisive act ; but here a relation is dissolved by an advisory one only.

Their second resolve was, *Whether a prospect of a minister's*  
*much,*



*much greater and more extensive usefulness, amongst another people, may, can, and in any circumstances afford sufficient reason for removing his pastoral relation from one church to another?* Resolved in the affirmative. With all the witticism and art, envelop'd in these words, *may, can and in any circumstances, &c.* it would have appear'd quite as honest, and as much to their purpose, if both resolves had been put in one, and that had been in the following form, viz. Whether the pastoral relation between a minister and a church, was of such a nature, that it might be dissolv'd at any time when he desir'd it, and had a prospect of advancing his temporal interest thereby?

Their third resolve was, *Whether upon most serious and deliberate consideration of the reasons offer'd to this council, it be their opinion, that Mr. S's removal to the second presbyterian church in P-----a, be adviseable?* Resolved in the affirmative; and accordingly this council advise thereto. Their next words are, *This council assure the fourth church and society in G-----d, that in coming to this determination they have felt the greatest concern and compassion for them, in a view of their destitute circumstances, (after all the troubles they have already pass'd through) which the execution of this resolution must necessarily leave them in, and hope that nothing but a sense of duty, and the great interest and general welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom, hath influenced them thereto.*

Compassion in some clergymen, and savages, I see don't operate alike; for when one of the latter is about to kill a beloved animal, he will do it with a softly blow; but the former, professing compassion, strikes cruelly hard. Methinks their hopes above-mentioned, were but poorly founded, if they tell us the truth: For soon after the council was dismiss'd, two of the principal members were ask'd, for what reason they gave Mr. S. such advice? They not mentioning (perhaps had forgot) one word about the *general welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom*, (honestly for once) said, his *uneasiness* where he was, and his *strong inclination* to remove to P-----a, were the reasons they acted upon. The truth I believe was this, They had once resolv'd it was not in their  
opinion,

opinion, for the *general welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom*, nor adviseable for Mr. S. to remove to P-----a. Such an account we had from one of Mr. S's best friends, that such a vote had actually pass'd, and that the council had, or was about to draw up their advice to that purport, and also an exhortation for his people, to treat him with their former respect. I don't say that this is really true ; but so much as this I must believe, that the question was once put, whether it was adviseable for Mr. S. to remove to P-----a, and that it was negatived. This by some means came to the knowledge of Mr. S. his family, and doubtless the com---rs. Upon which Mrs. S. was heard to say to Mr. S. Why don't you go in to the council, and tell them that 'tis your duty, and you must go ? or words to that import. Upon which Mr. S. went in, and manifested his *inclination* to remove, in such a manner, that it alter'd the opinions of several of them, and brought them very seriously and deliberately to their third resolve. The world perhaps would have been at a loss for the true reasons of their advice, had not some of them been so kind as to tell them 'twas Mr. S's *strong inclination* to remove. And if that was truly the reason, (which I don't greatly dispute) then it was not *the general welfare of Christ's kingdom*. Thus (if so) this council set aside the former call of his own people, as a call of God, or an indication of his will, in the room of which they have put a man's own *inclination*, which stands as an evident token of God's will, and a rule of duty ; and in this case it was a rule of duty, both for the council and Mr. S. If a man's *inclination* be a rule of duty, what need of law or gospel ? No christian on earth, I believe, except this council, ever thought a man's *inclination* was a call in providence, or a rule of duty. A modern Deist would not own such a principle, nor any other human being ; unless it be one who denies all moral obligation. Therefore, I think they ought to have hop'd, that Mr. S's *inclination*, his, and their duty, and *the general welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom*, were inseparably connected.

But let us examine a little further, whether *the general welfare*



*welfare of Christ's kingdom*, was the reason or not of this council's advice. Had Mr. S. appear'd as much *inclin'd* to tarry with his own people as he did to remove, their advice no doubt would have been just the reverse ; or could they have seen the least disaffection to a removal, they would have been very sorry to disoblige the good gentleman so much as to make him leave a habitation so pleasant as his, and a parish to an individual agreed in him. *The general welfare of Christ's kingdom* would probably have appear'd on the side of his tarrying ; but so *strong an inclination* as his, in so good a cause, was a plain and evident rule of duty. Such a large country as that, where thousands were perishing for want of instruction ; a country almost destitute of ministers ; multitudes obliged to travel 20, 30, or 40 miles to hear a sermon, (as the com----rs said was the case) no wonder a good man's *inclination* should be so very *strong* for the *welfare* of such a number of mankind. Doubtless this would tempt one to forsake many of the comforts of life, to go through many difficulties, dangers and inoculations ; and look on a salary of about £. 80 as a mere trifle for one of about £. 250, to live in meanness and poverty, in that large American city in all the politeness and fashions of the world.

Thus we may see, that the idea or notion this council had of a man's *inclination*, was the same that Solomon had of wisdom, *it is profitable to direct*. Why was not this important discovery never before made ? But discoveries in the moral, as well as natural world, are progressive. I will mention one reason to prove, that some such thing as above intimated, are the true foundation of their notion of *extensive usefulness*. Some of the clergy tell us, that 'tis a conclusive argument for the doctrine of human depravity, that no one individual of the sons of Adam, ever maintain'd their original moral rectitude ; therefore all mankind are sinners. If I say I believe this argument is conclusive, I as much believe, all church history, can't produce one instance, of a clergyman's ever removing, from a salary of £. 250 to one of £. 80, with his consent ; which I think is as conclusive, and from which may be determin'd, what are their notions,  
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and reasons for *extensive usefulness*. And which act from the best motives, the world must judge, either one of the first professors of christianity, who offer'd to purchase the extraordinary gifts of the spirit with *money* ; or those who barter the common gifts for *money*.

One thing further that inclines me to think the notion of *extensive usefulness*, is founded, on what is above intimated, is an expression of a late celebrated D. D. in this colony, viz. *that the L--d J--s C---st needed money, as much as other men*. This I had from a gentleman of that order, who said he was ear witness to it ; it therefore can't be scrupled, or disputed. If he meant by this, that so long as the L--d J--s C---st see fit to uphold such a race of beings as men, and support them mediately by the common comforts, and conveniences that this world affords ; or that those who profess to be his ministers, crave it as much as other men, I would not greatly dissent from him. But perhaps I have not hit upon the true meaning of that gentleman, and therefore would not infer too much from it. I am sensible almost all wise men have ever been agreed, that, that powerful argument, GOLD, is but a low motive, to influence mankind to action, in religious matters ; but great and wise men have often been influenced thereby, and sometimes have made use of it. Then, well might the Com----rs from P-----a, offer a considerable sum, to one of the principal members of this society, to use his influence for Mr. S.'s removal ; but it was rejected with so much scorn and indignation, that it is very improbable to me, that it was offer'd to one in holy orders, as was reported from ---- And whether St. John's, or St. Paul's sentiments were consonant with the beforementioned gentleman's, or many of his cloth, with respect to J--s C---st's or his minister's wanting money as much as other men, I am not able to say. However, one of them speaks to this purpose, *He that loveth the world, how dwelleth the love of God in him ?* The other says, *Be not covetous ; not greedy after filthy lucre*. But I see some objections may be made against these men's opinions ; for one was an illiterate old fisherman, and the other 'twas said, much learning had made



made mad; and they did not so well know, as divines do at this day, the necessitous circumstances, that C---st, and his ministers are under for CASH. And was I to read another of St. Paul's passages, to suit the times, I should read in this manner; *Godliness with great gain is contentment; for we brought nothing into this world, and 'tis certain we can carry nothing out*, therefore, let us get, and use what we can, while we are in it; *and having food and raiment, and every worldly good, let us be therewith content; for the want of money, is the root of all evil*: and while some have wanted, and could not obtain it, they have *pierced themselves through with many sorrows*; but thou O man of the world! flee the want, and follow the enjoyment of it. And whether the temper and conduct of many in holy orders, does not rather correspond with such a reading, than with the original, must be left with others to determine.

I can't but take notice of the council's view, of this determination of theirs; that it was as decisive as an act of the court of heaven; for say they, "*the execution of this resolution, must necessarily leave the fourth church and society in G---d in distitute circumstances.*" A fatal decisive act indeed! no way to avoid it that I can think of, but one; that was to comply with Mr. S.'s proposal, which he made about two months before, that if the society would augment his salary, from £. 80 to £. 95, he would bind himself to refuse all CALLS that should ever after be made to him. But possibly you may quere, how would this prevent it, if advice can release from one obligation, why not from another? 'Tis easy to see it would never have been ask'd, nor given, by reason of his *extensive usefulness* where he was.

In conference with one of the council, he told me, they did not suppose, (not himself) that advice was such a decisive powerful thing, that it would dissolve any relation; not even that between a minister and church; but they suppose, that there is such a power and efficacy in it, that either party may take such advantage from it, as regularly to dissolve the relation themselves. So some philosophers tell us there is no coldness in ice; but there is that  
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power in it, that makes the hand cold that touches it. This gentleman further says, that if Mr. S. (on hearing the pleas the society made) had been convinced, that 'twas his duty to have staid with his people, he might regularly have tarried, altho' the council advised him to remove to P-----a. There is now therefore no power in advice, and its of no signification, nor will it direct a man in the way of duty ; for, according to this, 'tis all terminated in a man's own *inclination*. Had not this council made this important discovery, we might have died like our fore-fathers, grossly ignorant of the nature and power of advice. I remember to have read somewhere, that the elders of the Jewish church, by some means, made the law of God of none effect, by dissolving the relation between father and son ; and doubtless it was done by advising the son to follow his *own inclination*, or if he could advantage himself more by leaving his father, than by tarrying with him, he was advised to do it, tho' the commandment of God was set aside thereby.

Suffer me here a small digression, (if it be one.) Two persons in discourse on the conduct of this council, particularly on an advisory act being sufficient to dissolve a relation ; one of them seem'd to be a good deal chagrin'd, and in great consternation, he trembled for fear he should loose his wife ; altho' he owns the relation between a husband and wife is not exactly like that between a minister and church, yet he could not see any reason why an ecclesiastical council could not advise as well for the releasing one obligation as another. His wife, he said, was a beauty ; and of superior talents ; with a good deal of ambition ; of a *strong inclination* for living in high life ; and his fortune was so low that she could not shine as she wish'd : And since her hearing of this affair, has drop'd several hints of calling a council ; for a man of fortune had made her considerable offers ; she is sure she can make as good pleas as any minister on earth ; she can certainly be more *extensively useful* in a higher sphere of life : Nay, her *usefulness* is at an end where she is, and her heart and soul is upon *Harry Weal-thy*, and her *inclination* is very *strong* for a dismissal. Some such



such reasons as these she has already mentioned to me, and she has began to write her letter missive. I fear what may happen, her tongue is very perswasive, to be sure, with the additional charmes of her face ; and besides, she can add religious motives too, if she pleases. I have thoughts of preferring a petition to the assembly at their next session, to have these councils confin'd to the relation of a minister and church only. His friend reply'd, I hardly think you will get a hearing ; perhaps there is two to one would be glad if they were confin'd to the relation of husband and wife only. Besides, should she proceed and call a council, those pious gentlemen would not so much as listen to her ; they would tell her 'twas nothing but female coquetry, or something worse ; and that God and her own consent had placed her in that family, and she ought to do her duty there. If the reasons she should offer are much like, or the very same that Mr. S. made use of, her motives are not the same. You and I, and many others, may think that ministers want more money, but if they do, it is always for pious uses.

In the next place, the council mention ten, or twelve reasons sum'd up in the words, "*Much more extensive usefulness ; or the general welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom,*" as they had before hop'd, "*WITH OTHER REASONS, have outweigh'd whatever hath been urged on the other side ; and hath influenced us, to the foregoing resolve.*" 'Tis difficult to determine the exact number of reasons, there sum'd up, in the words, "*other reasons, &c.* perhaps there may be an hundred ; I believe I may venture to say ten or twelve, else one might think, time would have serv'd to have let us known, what they were ; considering (perhaps) the most weighty of them, was therein contain'd.

'Tis also difficult to determine what they were ; but had they been such reasons, as would justify such a council in acting upon them, it was but reasonable to expect, to know what they were, from them ; seeing they were so fond of assigning many reasons, for their advice ; but this it seems they were unwilling to do ; and no wonder they were ; for  
it

it is pretty evident, that Mr. S.'s *inclination* to remove, was one, and perhaps the most influential of any, or all the many reasons they mention ; for we see how soon their opinions were alter'd, on hearing this Mr. S.'s weighty and determining reason ; one of the committee from the council, in conference with the society, said he had alter'd his opinion since dinner. How can this be justified ? Or how can they justify themselves in assembling together in a religious council, to determine what was God's will, and a man's duty in an important case, and then determine their advice upon a man's *inclination* ; and then more securely to conceal the deceit, enumerate a number of reasons, however religious, yet less, or (perhaps) of no importance, as to their influence on their minds, and secrete the more important reasons (as to their influence, &c.) in the words *other reasons* ? Doubtless they might think it might go unsuspected among so great a number of religious reasons and motives, those other reasons doubtless were suggested, and laid before the council in a private manner ; and the society had never opportunity to answer them, and no doubt they thought them unanswerable ; if not, they are hardly justifiable, in not calling both parties together, that reply might be made, to any thing offer'd, respecting the case ; and I must suppose, that what Mr. S. said to them in private, (whether it was openly to the whole council at once, or to the members separately, and in a private manner, it matters not) was not exactly agreeable, with what he said in publick, i. e. before the council and society, he there declar'd, that the thing was too weighty for him to determine ; he was at a loss with regard to his duty in the affair, and should take the advice of the council as determining. If he had made this proviso viz. If it was agreeable to his *inclination*, it would perhaps, have been somewhat fuller to his purpose, and nearer his meaning. For as some of the council say, he manifestly appear'd to them, determin'd to go ; whether they advis'd him to go, or not ; and as soon as he perceiv'd their advice was for his tarrying, and so contrary to his *inclination*, he appear'd able to determine the whole matter himself, before he could



could not determine even his own duty, but now he could determine his own, the council's, and the church's duty, without assistance, well enough. A marvellous change indeed !

This council *Earnestly desire the fourth church and society, to take these reasons into their most serious consideration, and hope they will be in the same sentiments with them.*—This was very natural to hope, (as they had fell in with Mr. S.'s sentiments) the society would fall in with their's. Doubtless Adam hoped all intelligencies would fall in with his sentiments, because he had fell in with Eve's ; which was nothing more or less, than to follow their own *inclinations* ; but how they could expect the society should fall in with them, and upon the same reasons, before they knew what they were, is very strange and marvellous indeed.

This council further say, *that this advice was sought and given, as they trust, in a way that God hath appointed.* This advice was sought by Mr. S. only ; as you may see in the latter part of my former letter. And as some of the members of the council have said, Mr. S.'s *strong inclination* for a removal, was what their advice turn'd upon ; it is therefore very evident, it was not in a way of God's appointing ; but only permitted by him, as was the fall of angels and men. And further, God never gave, either a council or an individual, any authority to advise another, to the acting of any thing that is either contrary, or not agreeable to his reveal'd will ; therefore, if this action to which Mr. S. was advised, was not agreeable to gospel rule, (which I presume was not) then it was not given in a way of God's appointing ; neither had they a right thus to advise. Therefore must take the liberty to dissent from this reverend council in opinion ; and think the church and society were justifiable in not complying therewith.

I can't but think, Sir, by this time you want to ask, if Mr. S. could determine the whole affair himself, why should he trouble so many of his brethren, to travel some of them near 40 miles ; and cause them, and most of his parish to spend two or three days in the affair ; and why, after the council had given their reasons, in writing to the society, they should afterwards say, some others, were the true reasons ?

In answer to the first, 'tis quite plain Mr. S. was not willing, to take all the honour of such a piece of conduct to himself ; but from his over generous disposition, was willing some of his brethren should share with him ; and on the other hand, they acted from the same generous principles ; for they soon perceiv'd that they had a greater share than they expected ; and as Mr. S. was the first promoter, they were willing that he should have his full part.

May we suppose that these good gentlemen might make such a mistake, as to say at one time that it was one thing, and at another time, another thing, that influenced them to give such advice ?—Then may we not reasonably suppose, that they were as much mistaken, in thinking it was sought and given in a way of God's appointing ; or may they not be as much mistaken in the whole ? and may not some others be the true reasons, instead of those they say were, and were not ? Possibly (besides what hath been before observ'd) to exercise ecclesiastical authority,

authority, as one step towards opening the door, for the introduction of the Presbyterian form of church government ; that ministers may be remov'd from small parishes, such as W—b—y, E—th—n, N—h—d, &c. — Or perhaps these gentlemen have such a peculiar regard for scripture prophecy, that they were willing to be the happy instruments of fulfilling one of St. John's ; which is, that a certain animal should rise out of the earth, with *two horns like a lamb*, yet speak like a dragon. However, after all I suppose 'tis impossible to determine, what were all their secret reasonings and motives.

*The union and communion, which ought to be in all parts of the body of Christ*, is another reason they make use of. Their notion of union and communion is plainly this, that a larger society of Christians, have a right (if they are so disposed, as the second presbyterian church in P——a was) to deprive a less of their pastor, with 4 or 500l. of their monies, and leave the less to retrieve the loss as they can — I am sorry I have so much reason to say, that this principle looks so much like one which prevails in another sect in G. B. who plead that there ought to be such a union and communion amongst all mankind, that every one should share in each others cash ; and often when one meets a man on the road, he demands all, or part of it — if he refuses, he pistols him, or cuts his throat, and carries off the whole ; and pleads to himself the union and communion, that ought to be amongst all mankind ; and the plea stands good in his own mind, till it is answer'd at Newgate or Tyburn. I would not willingly think, any of them are transported to P——a.

Another thing I will just take notice of, is this, viz: In this advice, which they say they hope nothing but a sense of duty, &c. influenced them to give, and which they trust was sought, and given in a way of God's appointing ; they never so much as intimated, that there was any gospel precept or precedent, or church canon, that gave a council authority to proceed, and advise in this manner ; upon which I may reasonably suppose that there was none ; else no doubt, they would have been wary enough, to have brought them in to their assistance. —

And give me leave here to conjecture, that such a debate as the following, might arise in a council, where there was opposition to the measures taken, viz.

G—b. I cannot join in this conclusion,  
'Twill lead us into much confusion :  
For not a word of holy reading,  
Can be produc'd for this proceeding ;  
And this advice which you have voted,  
By human law can't be supported.  
Advice as well as acts decisive,  
Must be by law, or inconclusive.

W—ms. If when on searching, we can find none,  
Then 'tis plain that we must make one ;

When



When law and gospel, do neglect us,  
 Sure then our reason must direct us.  
 For want of law we did resolve,  
 Cov'nents we may, and can dissolve;  
 And lest our meaning they should miss,  
 We'll plainly show them what it is ;  
 And this's time we fully know,  
 For he's a *mind and let to go*.  
 Besides, 'twill serve in after ages,  
 As tho' 'twas found in gospel pages.

S—d. You know the people they did plead,  
 By gospel rules we shou'd proceed,  
 And that a council ecclesiastic,  
 Shou'd use the law, instead of a stick.

R—ns. Ah ! What they said was silly matter,  
 Meerly nothing else but smatter,  
 But what was said on t'other side.  
 Was weighty, cannot be deny'd :  
 Those reasons which to us they told,  
 Were really worth their weight in GOLD.

If, Sir, you should still be inquisitive to know, what I really thought was the true reason of Mr. S's removal, I had rather give you an English story, than a positive answer.

" A young candidate propos'd himself to a bishop, for the imposition of hands, the reverend father refus'd him, unless he would answer him to these questions, viz. Who was Melchizedech ? And who was his father ? He being unable to give a direct answer to these questions, was oblig'd to return to his father, and tell him that he was refus'd, and on what account ; his father gave him further instructions, and sent him back again ; on his return, he told his lordship, that he believ'd he could answer his questions ; upon which the bishop asked him, who was Melchizedech ? He puts his hand into his pocket, and pulls out a large purse of silver, and says, that's Melchizedech, and from the other pocket, pulls out a larger of gold, and says, that's his father."—A very satisfactory answer to the good bishop.—To which I will only add a divine sentence, MONEY ANSWERS ALL THINGS.

And as I think Mr. S's removal from his people, is a violent breach of covenant and contract between him and them, and that centering solely in himself.—So I think, he stands sharply reprov'd by one of the prophets, if I may be allow'd to use the word people, instead of another. *Because the Lord hath been witness between thee, and the people of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, yet are they thy companions, and the people of thy covenant ; therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously, against the people of his youth.*

Their last resolve or order was, *That the doings of this council, be recorded*

recorded in the book of the records of the confederation of New-Haven county. This was wisely done, tho' perhaps, not upon the same principle, that the civil magistrate, hangs a notorious criminal in gibbets, to deter all others from the like offence.—Yet I pray GOD it may have the same effect.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your Friend,

and humble Servant,

September 14, 1769.

P. S. The case here did not happen just as it once did in a former age, when one single prophet withstood four hundred ; for here two out of nine, made a noble stand for the privilege of the New-England churches, viz. The Rev'd Messrs. S—w—d, and G—d—h, with seven worthy delegates ; who, I trust, will reign with the first martyrs ; while some others may cut and lance themselves, and cry from morning till noon, to their golden—endeavouring to leap on his altar.



F I N I S.



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